



Student Teacher to Master Teacher: A Practical Guide for Educating Students with Special Needs (4th Edition)

By Michael S. Rosenberg, Lawrence J. O'Shea, Dorothy J. O'Shea

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The fourth edition of *Student Teacher to Master Teacher: A Practical Guide for Educating Students with Special Needs*, confronts the challenges special education teachers are facing in becoming reflective, certified professionals. This book prepares future educators, practicing teachers, and alternative certification professionals with the demands educators will face in the special education and inclusive classroom. Providing realistic and rigorous field experiences balanced with research-based content and activities, this book "bridges the gap" between methods, student teaching and being an effective and successful special education teacher. For New K-12 Special Education and General Education Teachers.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

Now, more than ever, special education teachers are facing bigger challenges in becoming reflective, certified professionals. The fourth edition of *Student Teacher to Master Teacher: A Practical Guide for Educating Students with Special Needs* provides teachers with immediate survival and success skills in understanding the laws, planning and assessing instruction, managing the classroom, and organizing paperwork associated with being a teacher working with students with special needs.

New or enhanced coverage in the fourth edition:

- “On the Job” preparation applications and activities to prepare teachers for a career in Special Education:
 - *A Professional Glimpse* provides case studies demonstrating real-life situations.
 - *Pause and Reflect About the Profession* encourages teacher professionals to critically think about their roles and responsibilities as special education teachers.
 - *Point and Click About the Profession* offers technology resources and information for novice special education teachers.
- Information from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Common Core Standards demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to be an effective teacher working with students with special needs.

This practical guide is a resource to maintain during a teacher’s professional journey. Providing realistic and rigorous field experiences balanced with research-based content activities, *Student Teacher to Master Teacher: A Practical Guide for Educating Students with Special Needs* “bridges the gap” between methods, student teaching, and being an effective and successful special education teacher.

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Our basic purpose in preparing the third edition of *Student Teacher to Master Teacher* was to provide a reflective guide for use during supervised special education student teaching experiences or graduate field experience. We believe that field experiences are often the single most important component of a preservice level teacher development program.

The approach used in our guide is based on two interrelated assumptions. First, we believe that student teaching and initial field experiences should be rigorous and as realistic as possible. They should be developed to ensure that the preservice-level teacher enters the professional job market with the skills needed for both immediate survival and continued success. Few teacher educators would question this view, and many may regard it as an obvious, somewhat pious, statement of fact. Interpretation and actual implementation of this view appear to vary considerably, however, affecting the validity of the basic assumption in reference to specific teacher-training programs. In the absence of structured and purposeful activities or requirements, there may be no valid criteria for assessing easily delineated teaching skills across varied settings. In fact, the apparent discrepancy between theory and successful application may significantly reduce program credibility.

Second, special education field experiences should incorporate a variety of structured requirements and activities that collectively "bridge the gap" between methods and/or laboratory courses and actual independent, professional teaching. We recognize the need for more structured, reality-based, and relevant preservice experiences. When observing, supervising, managing, and evaluating preservice and beginning teachers, we found a critical need to link preservice training and field experience requirements to real teaching skills and actual on-the-job requirements. Topics and activities in this guide were chosen because we believe they represent many of the most pertinent issues that new teachers will face when they begin their field experiences or when they manage their first classrooms on their own.

Through our own experiences as classroom teachers and supervisors of developing teachers, we also realized the needs of college supervisors. We believe that individuals involved with the supervision of student teachers and field-experience students often are the forgotten souls, desperately trying to promote best practices in the face of problems of logistics, timing, and realities of modern schools. Often, these are individuals who must face experienced teachers' claims to novice teachers that "it can't be done like that" or "theory is only relevant in textbooks and it will never work here." To the university instructors' calls for "increased best practices" in the classrooms, we believe that college supervisors will welcome a commercially prepared resource to aid them in their roles. This guide was developed to reduce the amount of time needed by supervisory faculty and staff in the review and possible remediation of key concepts associated with successful teaching. We hope the use of this guide will allow more time for the important job of observing and providing feedback to preservice teachers and for supervisors' liaisons to classroom teachers and administrators, university faculty, and preservice teachers.

In summary, throughout this guide we provide tips and insights to preservice and beginning teachers to help them grow professionally with their chosen career over time, starting during their initial field experiences and continuing through their beginning years in teaching. We recognize the enormous amount of information that teachers new to special education must obtain and be able to demonstrate during their initial work with students with mild to moderate disabilities. This guide is meant to help new teachers make the transition from the role of student at the preservice level to the role of professional at the in-service level. Each topic in the guide has been judged a pertinent topic for new teachers and, we believe, will remain relevant to them as their experience grows.

ORGANIZATION OF THE TEXT

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the student teaching experience and an overview of the field of working with students with mild to moderate disabilities. The chapter discusses the typical fears and concerns of student teachers and beginning special education teachers and reviews the characteristics of students with mild to moderate disabilities and the ways educational services are delivered (e.g., inclusion, continuum of service, and so on). The chapter also introduces ethical and professional standards of practice for teachers that will be highlighted throughout the subsequent chapters. Tips on using diplomacy in the workplace and an emphasis on maximizing people skills underscore our call for both effective interpersonal communication and teaching skills necessary to become "master teachers."

Chapter 2 gives the novice teacher an understanding of the legal bases for assessment and programming for students with disabilities. Pertinent legislation and litigation of the past three decades, most notably IDEA, are presented as the foundation of legal challenges that teachers today will face. Major components of federal mandates for school-age students and infants and toddlers are summarized, as are tips for working within the system to solve potential legal problems faced by teachers. Assumptions underlying successful mediation attempts with students, family members, and professionals are discussed as means to avoid unnecessary litigation.

Chapter 3 deals with the "nuts and bolts" of actual instructional themes of the classroom. Tips on organizing and managing instructional time, with an emphasis on effectiveness and consistency, are presented. Ways of setting up and maintaining effective scheduling procedures are discussed, and a system for the development of classroom rules and procedures, as well as other management strategies (e.g., planning for group size, arranging the physical environment) are provided. Available resources at the new teacher's disposal and tips for beginning the school year are included.

The major focus of Chapter 4 is on how the preservice and beginning teacher can link classroom-based assessment procedures to instruction. Initially, several basic assessment concepts are reviewed. These are followed by a concise delineation of step-by-step procedures for implementing curriculum-based assessments in special education and inclusive education environments.

Chapter 5 discusses the need for effective planning as a catalyst to appropriate instruction. Successfully planned lessons are illustrated to include the relationship of instructional objectives to students' individualized education programs (IEPs), the teacher's preparation for the demonstration of understanding of prerequisite skills for students, task analyses and learning sequences, the need for concise descriptions of instructional activities and materials linked to predetermined objectives, systematic methods to evaluate lessons, and anticipation of problems that might occur anywhere along the implementation phase of the instructional delivery to students. A section on lesson plan follow-up with tips on remediating and preventing actual problems observed during lessons, a review of instructional techniques used in varied lesson formats, and tips for lesson appraisal so that new teachers can practice self-evaluation are embedded within the chapter.

Chapter 6 stresses the importance of delivery of instruction. The concept of effective teacher behaviors is discussed along the dimensions of a structured academic focus, specific teaching of academic concepts, and a planned instructional sequence based on environmental variables and needs of students. Dimensions of direct instruction, the guided discovery approach, and strategic instruction are identified with numerous examples of teaching approaches throughout the chapter.

Chapter 7 provides developing and beginning teachers with a summary of the paperwork involved in special education and the documentation necessary in the referral process for special education. The chapter begins with the prereferral steps of helping students with problem behaviors or learning difficulties remain in the least restrictive environment (LRE) before calling for changes in students' educational placements. New teachers are provided with the steps of working with other professionals and parents to document precisely the need for all changes in educational decisions. Tips for working with parents, administrators, general educators, and others involved in educational planning teams are pinpointed. Additionally, IEPs and IEP meetings are discussed, stressing the IEP as a legal plan that parents and professionals develop together. The chapter concludes with suggestions to help developing and beginning teachers write reports of students' progress and to promote continuous methods of communication with parents and other significant professionals.

Chapter 8 is provided to encourage classroom management by the new teacher from the beginning of his or her involvement with students. The chapter was updated to underscore the importance of having a comprehensive school and classroom management program, as well as a series of strategies for the development of functional behavioral assessments of troubling behavior. A brief review of behavioral principles and rules governing classroom behavior is provided to highlight teachers' use of strategies to increase and/or maintain appropriate student behaviors and to decrease or eliminate inappropriate student behaviors. Tips for identifying, observing, recording, and illustrating problem behaviors are explained. Logistical concerns in developing large-group management and means of designing individual behavior change programs and reports are discussed. Finally, the chapter provides some practical strategies to teachers

to facilitate and promote self-control stra...

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